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29 March 1966

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN

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*Vietnam: (Information as of 4:30 AM EST)

Political Developments in South Vietnam: Hue, Da Nang, and Saigon were outwardly quiet yesterday, but there is no indication that political agitation against the Ky government is subsiding.

In Hue, the local radio station continues to lend itself to inflammatory student attacks on the military regime in Saigon and on US support for Ky. Yesterday, the station broadcast a warning from the "Popular Struggle Force" that it might be necessary to resort to violence if the people's aspirations were not satisfied. Despite the continued restraint of Buddhist leaders in Saigon, university students in the capital report that they are under increasing pressure to take part in demonstrations.

The government, meanwhile, is apparently continuing to consult various religious and political leaders concerning its compromise proposals. The mayor of Da Nang, an appointee of General Thi and a sympathizer with the present antigovernment campaign, has told the US consul that the "struggle" would end if Buddhist monk Tri Quang accepted the government's solution. He refused, however, to speculate on what would happen if only the Buddhist Institute leadership in Saigon agreed to a compromise.

The Military Situation in South Vietnam: Allied forces are continuing to press the initiative in areas of suspected Communist concentrations, but no major contacts have been reported during the past 24 hours.

The US Marine battalion which initiated Operation JACK STAY on 25 March with an amphibious landing



south of Saigon is continuing to operate along the main waterway to the capital. Casualties reported to date are four Marines killed and 15 wounded as against eight Viet Cong killed. In support of the operation, three B-52 Stratofortress bombers on the night of 27-28 March struck a suspected Viet Cong base camp and training facility some 16 nautical miles south of Saigon. The Marines are conducting a ground follow-up.

A Communist force, possibly consisting of two battalions of the 1st Viet Cong regiment, yesterday attacked a South Vietnamese Army battalion in Quang Ngai Province in the southern part of I Corps. A joint Vietnamese - US Marine reaction operation has been launched in the area. Friendly losses thus far are four killed and 50 wounded (including 30 US), versus 57 Viet Cong killed.

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*Ecuador: The crisis has deepened with the resignation of four ministers, and the junta, while attempting to maintain control by military force, appears to be seeking a graceful means to leave power.

The armed forces high command met with the junta last night to consider courses of action, and reportedly has approved turning the executive over to an interim civilian official such as ex-president Galo Plaza, who would preside over scheduled elections. Ad hoc opposition political groups, scenting weakness, are redoubling their efforts to persuade the military to leave office immediately. The junta president, Admiral Castro, reportedly has said that this will be done "as soon as possible."

Violence continues in Guayaquil, Quito, Portoviejo, and Cuenca as the army and police take firm steps to control widespread unrest.

Yesterday, security forces occupied the universities at Cuenca and Guayaquil, where defiant students had been holed up since last week. At Guayaquil a large-scale demonstration involved attacks on the US-owned public utility company, and at Quito police dispersed demonstrating students.

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NOTES

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USSR-India: [The USSR has agreed to provide India with bomber aircraft.]

The USSR has supplied free world countries with both the IL-28 and TU-16 medium jet bombers. The Indian Air Force is currently equipped with British Canberra light jet bombers. India already has purchased a large number of Soviet transport aircraft, jet fighters, helicopters, and equipment to produce Soviet-model jet fighters.]

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Turkey: The election yesterday of General Cevdet Sunay, former chief of the General Staff, as president of Turkey should help to restore political stability. [Although he is committed to democratic practices, Sunay and the military high command may decide to take a stronger hand if Prime Minister Demirel's regime fails to improve the political and economic situation soon.] Sunay is generally regarded as pro-American and pro-NATO. He would probably support military intervention on Cyprus if necessary to protect Turkish interests.

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